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Police Tapes Comments Of Chicago Prosecutor

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CHICAGO, April 28 — A high-ranking Chicago police officer pushed his way into a crowd of newsmen today to tape-record the comments of a special prosecutor investigating the police role in the deaths of two Black Panthers.

His job, presumably, was to detect whether the prosecutor, Barnabas F. Sears, might say anything that could be used as prejudicial material to justify dismissing the grand jury investigating the slaying of the Panthers.

The investigation could lead to the indictment of State's Attorney Edward V. Hanrahan and other top law enforcement officials.

The officer, clad in a business suit and coat, was Lt. Raymond F. O'Malley, who in the past has acted as Mayor Richard J. Daley's liaison with the police department.

When reporters asked him why he was tape-recording Sears' comments, O'Malley said, "Everything that's important in this city, I'm assigned to."

Who assigned him?

"My assignments are my own," O'Malley replied. He also insisted that a court order banning the use of recording and television equipment above the courthouse's first floor did not apply to police officers.

O'Malley thrust his microphone into a group of reporters surrounding Sears, who had just emerged from another session of the grand jury.

The incident occurred amid a continuing legal battle over

whether published reports about the grand jury's secret deliberations amount to prejudicing the jurors and is cause for their dismissal.

Reports were published last week that the jury already has voted to indict Hanrahan, a protege of Mayor Daley, and other top officials for allegedly obstructing justice in the investigation. Black Panthers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark were killed in the December, 1969, police raid.

Judge Joseph A. Power, once a member of Daley's former law firm, already has indicated that he may disband the grand jury if it can be shown that the published reports prejudiced the jurors. That would mean the end of the fourth official investigation of the slayings of the Panthers.